

MAP 2026 - Geopolitics and AI: Using RL to Simulate Real World Dynamics, and Untraining Predictability in the Face of GenAI systems

In this MAP cycle, Elliott expects to recruit eight students, four per project. The two projects are listed below, along with preferred prerequisites (students without the prerequisites are also encouraged to apply).

1. The RL and Simulating Geopolitical Decision-Making project.
 - Four students. Pre-req: successfully concluded CSC207 before the Summer of 2026. Having taken CSC261 in the spring of 2026 is not a requirement, but is highly encouraged.
2. The Cognitive Robustness Research Studio: Untraining Predictability in the Face of GenAI systems (First-year students are highly encouraged to apply)
 - Four students:
 - a. Three students: you are either a first-year student or a student majoring in Humanities or Social Studies (having taken CSC151 is preferable).
 - b. One student will be the project leader. Ideally, you are a third-year student who has successfully completed CSC151 and has a strong background in the Humanities or Social Studies.

*Note that the actual number of students invited to join each project will vary according to the number of applications on each project (and on MAP funding).

How to Apply

- Go to Grinnell Share and submit the Summer Research Application Form.
 - Answer and email the questions below to Dr. Elliott (*Emails must be sent by February 17th, end of the day*):
1. Academic honesty: you must write the answers yourself – help from GenAI systems is *not allowed*. Now, answer: Did you get assistance from any AI system to answer the questions in this document?
 2. Why are you applying for this MAP, and what are your research expectations?
 3. Visit the lab page (<https://elbica.cs.grinnell.edu/start-here/>) and answer: Why do you consider yourself a good fit for the ELBICA lab?
 4. Two projects are advertised. To which one are you applying and why? What makes it interesting to you?
 5. Given your project choice, do you have the preferred prerequisites (CSC207 for project 1, and either being a 1st-year student or a major in humanities or social studies for project 2)? If not, it is fine, feel free to talk about other relevant experiences.
 6. Are you applying to be a team leader of Project 2? If yes, is there any info you would like to share to make your application stronger?
 7. What is the connection between your major/minor/concentrations and previous education with your project choice?
 8. What makes your application a good fit for this MAP? What would you like to share to make your application stand out?
 9. Passion for doing research is a vital element in the ELBICA lab. What are your thoughts on that?



10. ELBICA lab's projects involve a lot of open-ended tasks: many times, you will be treated as a PhD student. What is your reaction to that? (For context, read the section: [ELBICA students reflected on their experiences and shared their advice with future lab members.](#))
11. How do you approach/navigate stressful academic situations?
12. The ELBICA lab emphasizes team collaboration. For you, what is the importance of team spirit?
13. What does "being coachable" mean to you, and why is it important?
14. If an offer is extended, you MUST reply as soon as possible to help me plan for the summer and to extend the opportunity to another student (if you reject the offer). It is totally fine if you are unsure - just email me to acknowledge that you received the offer, but need some time to figure things out. Here is the question:
Do you understand that:
 - a) You MUST acknowledge that you received the offer as soon as possible?
 - b) If you do not accept the offer and do not keep me in the loop about your brainstorming, you may be taking away the opportunity from another student?

